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Abstract of the Disclosure

An apparatus is provided for sorting documents contained with envelopes into selected batches of documents. An envelope feeder feeds a group of envelopes containing documents onto a document transport. A document extractor positioned along the path of movement extracts the documents from the envelopes. An orientation detector including a magnetic image reader and an optical image reader determines the orientation of selected documents along the path of movement. A document orientor changes the orientation of documents along the path of movement into a desired orientation. An image acquisition device acquires an image of the batch identification pieces and selected documents conveyed along the path of movement to enable the system controller to assign documents of selected transactions into selected batches. A non-volatile image storage medium stores the acquired images of the selected documents. The present invention also provides an apparatus for semi-automated processing of mail by severing an edge of each envelope in a stack of mail and presenting the edge-severed mail to an operator. The operator manually extracts the documents from each envelope and can then identify the type of transaction in the envelope. The operator then places the extracted documents into an input for an imaging device that acquires image data relating to the image of each document. A conveyor may be provided for conveying the documents from the imaging device to one or more output bins.